

91. (New) The in-process device of claim 90 wherein the other conductive layer comprises copper.

92. (New) The in-process device of claim 88 further comprising a second conductive layer formed on the conductive layer and a third conductive layer formed on the second conductive layer.

D2
E1
93. (New) The in-process device of claim 92 wherein the conductive layer comprises a metal layer, the second conductive layer comprises a tungsten nitride layer, and the third conductive layer comprises copper.

94. (New) The in-process device of claim 88 wherein the substrate comprises a silicon substrate.--

REMARKS

Claims 73-75 and newly added claims 77-94 are currently pending in the present patent application, with claim 76 having been cancelled. In an office action mailed December 19, 2002, the Examiner rejected claims 73-76 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by United States Patent Number 4,823,182 to Okumura ("Okumura").

In the claim rejections, the Examiner relies on Okumura for disclosing a conductive layer to "diborane," which was one of the materials in the group recited in the prior claims. Independent claim 73 does not include the recitation of diborane in the recited groups of materials, and for at least this reason this claim is allowable. New independent claims 81 and 88 similarly don't recite diborane, and are allowable for similar reasons over the art of record. The undersigned would like to point out that the present application is directed to reducing an ability of conductive layers to associate with oxygen, and that this language in the claims is not merely a recitation of the intended use of the layer as asserted by the Examiner. Instead, this language describes a characteristic of the recited conductive layer.

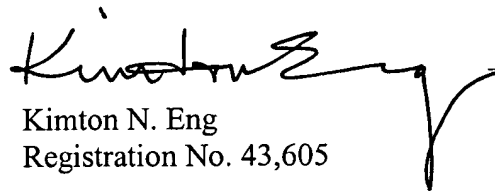
All pending claims are in condition for allowance, and favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to contact the

undersigned at the number listed below for a telephone interview if, upon consideration of this amendment, the Examiner determines any pending claims are not in condition for allowance. The undersigned also requests the Examiner to direct all future correspondence to the address set forth below in the event the Examiner shows a different correspondence address for the attorney of record.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made".

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures:

Postcard
Check
Fee Transmittal Sheet (+ copy)
Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement
Form PTO-1449 with Cited Reference (1)

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claim 76 has been cancelled.

Claim 73 has been amended as follows:

73. (Thrice Amended) An in-process device, comprising:
a substrate; and
a conductive layer over the substrate, the conductive layer being
exposed to a material selected from the group consisting of [diborane,] phosphine[,] and
methysilane [a carbon-silicon compound] to reduce an ability of the conductive layer to
associate with oxygen.